államföldrajzi kép /(The Picture of Political Geography)/. (Magyar föld, Magyar faj) /(Hungarian soil, Hungarian race)/ I-III. k.) Bpest, e. n. -- SZAMOTA-ZOLNAI, Magyar oklevélszótár /(Hungarian Document Register)/. Bpest, 1902-1906. 113

Our traditional ethnic groups and regions in the order of Dunántúl, Alföld, Felföld, Erdély are the following:

2. DUNÁNTÚL. -- Őrség. Historical formation. According to tradition recorded as early as the thirteenth century, after the Hungarian conquest, border guards were settled on the Vas portion of the western border, ('határőrség', 'speculatores'; 1272-1331: spec. Ewr dictorum, 1451: In districtu Eorsegh in Com. Castriferrei OSz.). From the third decade of the fourteenth century it was 'őrnagyság', with Őriszentpéter as the center, and with Felsőőri Miklós as its first 'őrnagy /(major)/' (1497: Ewr Nogh OSz.). Its area consists of the upper valley of the Zala River and the middle valley of the Kerka River, which is encircled by the following villages: Szalafő, Ispánk, Szaknyér, Pankasz, Szata (Szatta), Kerkáskápolna, Szomoróc, Kapornak, Őrihodos; including these villages there is a total of 18. The guards had privileges similar to those of the Székelys, and their legal position seemed to be of equal rank with that of the nobility. Part of those who were guarding the region of Szalafő (whose old name 1364: Zalafewewr, 1392: zalaewr, MNy. IX, 149) became privately controlled, with the estate of Németújvár, as early as the fourteenth century. The privileges of the rest were confirmed as late as the sixteenth century. Later, these also became serfs. With parts of the Székelys this is the second group that settled an area characterized by pine forests. Its ethnography is identical with that of the Magyars living in nearby Hetés and Göcsej and in general in the Zala and Kerka valleys (Szalaság, -- 1526: Zalafagg Erdy-C. NYSz. --); more than one of its ethnographical characteristics is related to those of the nearby Wendic group (tótság). 101 361 [131] [137]

The questions of the territorial connections of the military frontiers of Vas, naturally, must be omitted here, and we can touch merely upon the recorded groups. /4/

The second Magyar group of border guards is also located in Vas, in the area of Felsőőr which covers the valleys of the Pinka and Szék creeks, in the neighborhood of the other villages having 'őr' and 'lövő' in their names. The isolated group of the Magyar remnants of this island-like area consist of: Felsőőr, Alsóőr, and Őrsziget. We may add to them Kisjobbágyi, containing the Magyar

101 population of Jobbágyi (once also privileged), which has a German
361 majority (1496: Jobbagy Alsoewr Felseewr OSz.). As a result of its insular position, the region has abundant contacts with German influences; otherwise, it has ethnographical connections with the Magyars of Vas, Alsoorseg, and Zala. The people, like the Szekelys, engage in domestic industries, and go 'down to Hungary' with their wares. -- Even in this there are a few differences between the Alszeg and Felszeg of Felsőőr. They are also split as to religious denominations.

Göcsej ('the Göcsej', Göcsejség, called jocularly: Girgácia,
361 1818: Kerkatia; 'mockingly': Gergatia, MNy. XIII, 303; in the
133 northern part of the Nova district frequently: 'szegek országa (the land of the nails)'; 1266 Egurzug, 1323: Piliskezeg OSz.) is an area without exact boundaries; including roughly the part of County Zala which falls between the Zala River, Principális-canal (Nagycsatorna, Válicka), Kerka River, and Dráva River. The villages themselves do not admit that they belong to the area, because they feel mockery in the word Göcsej or from Göcsej; therefore, according to them, Göcsej begins (everywhere) with the 'neighboring village'. Its villages with their poor streets (muddy) preserved many traditions.

Hetés constitutes a group in Göcsej's immediate neighborhood, which is ethnographically almost in every respect identical with the latter, lying between Göcsej, Őrség, and the Vendség.

•[137] Hegyhát: between the Zala and Rába Rivers, and between Őrség and Kemenesalja, in Zala County, partly characterized by pine forests like Őrség, partly by beech forests, like Kemenesalja, together with the latter in the earlier period predominantly used for pasturing. It is joined by Kemenesalja, which possesses geographical traits identical to the northern part of Hegyhát; and is also related to it in natural features, but offers a better means of making a living.

Kemenesalja, a continuation of 'hegyhát' also in Vas County beginning approximately at Hegyhátgyertyános under the wooded ridge called Cser (one time obviously 'Kemenes'), between the Rába and Marcal Rivers; with its many villages is a group settled in the Marcal valley; in fact, the name is used to designate a geographical area or region. Its northernmost village, keeping the name of the area, is Kemenesszentpéter. Its most typical villages are located closely below the ridge; more exactly, these constitute the 'kemenesalja' settlements.

9: Eppstein S-4 (no date) 1945 EC1 Hungary EC1

that a well is sunk, it will find water sooner or later. In a village it is common to find a well in each courtyard, or alternatively, one between every pair of houses, serving two families. This water is, of course, apt to be stagnant, and the supply of pure water to the villages is one of the great health problems of Hungary. Budapest and the other large towns have their own supply. Two of the lakes, both in West Hungary—Lake Fertö, or the Neusiedlersee, now cut in two by the Austrian frontier, and Lake Balaton, are very large; Balaton is, indeed, the largest expanse of water in Central Europe. Both are, however, extremely shallow, and it is possible in some places to wade out in them for a couple of miles. The vegetation varies little. The most familiar trees are the poplar, the scrub-oak, and above all, the acacia, strictly speaking, the false acacia. This tree was first introduced into Hungary a century and a half ago, on account of its property in binding together light, sandy soils, and has now spread all over the country. There are many woods of it, and many village streets are adorned by a double row of these beautiful, feathery trees. In the hills there are beeches, oaks and a few firs, and along the rivers, huge willows, alders and aspens.

GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS. But with all this uniformity, there is still a considerable diversity between the different geographical areas of Hungary. The ancient Magyars, looking at the country from the place of their first settlement, between the Danube and the Tisza, and taking as the dominant features the rivers which were so im-